

Weekly National Intelligencer.

WASHINGTON: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1863.

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By GALE & SEATON.

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TO BE OR NOT TO BE?

The very interesting letter inserted below is from a gentleman of intelligence and honor, personally well known to us, and whose statements of fact are entitled to full credit. He is, moreover, a thorough student of the war, and has been a uniform and decided friend of the Administration. The result of his observations in a recent and extended tour in the South he has thought of sufficient interest to be communicated to the public here, and we are sure that all of our readers will agree with him. What he relates of Southern feeling and Southern hopes can hardly surprise any one who can imagine the extremity of suffering and the multiplied woes which the causeless rebellion has brought to every family of the South; but it is only those who from birth or long association understand the feeling in the South regarding their slaves, who can appreciate fully the fixedness and intensity of the Southern mind on that subject. We are not surprised, therefore, that the extremity of suffering and the hopelessness of the rebellion combined should inspire even many of those who were eager to enter into it with the desire to retrace their steps and return to their allegiance, as well as the masses who were forced into it; and we can well understand the writer when he represents the question of emancipation—regarded in the South as involving utter and irreparable ruin to their country—as the only substantial difficulty in the way of a restoration of the Union. It is for those who rule the destinies of this great country to say whether it shall, so far as depends on them, have Union and the Constitution, or immediate and forcible emancipation with ruin to a moiety of the country, protracted war, and a violated Constitution. How eloquent and forcible is the appeal with which the writer closes his letter, and which, notwithstanding its personal reference to the Chief Magistrate, we take the freedom of placing before him.

NORFOLK, AUGUST 26, 1863.

To the Editors of the National Intelligencer.

Having just returned from a tour through portions of the States of Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, and Kentucky, and having met in my travels many of the former prominent politicians of those States, and, as was most natural under the circumstances, had frequent conversations with them on the subject of the war, its origin, objects, bearings on the present and future of our country, and its probable result, I feel assured to some extent that a brief synopsis of the impressions made on my mind will not be altogether unacceptable to your readers.

The war, they argue, was instituted for the purpose of securing further guarantees to their own peculiar institution—slavery—and to repress abolitionism or Northern aggression on their rights. Its bearing on the institution has been to weaken and endanger its entire overthrow. They admit that they have been deceived by their political leaders, and that nearly all their promises have proven failures. They see, they feel the crushing effects of the war upon the Slave States, and admit if it indefinitely continue that the institution of slavery will not only be in danger of annihilation, but that their former slaves will be drafted into the army of the United States for the purpose of continuing the war on the South.

This one single fact bears more heavily upon them than any thing else connected with the war; and to escape this now apparent inevitable fate, they express a willingness to accede to any terms which shall not humiliate and degrade them. They affirm (in fact they expect, they hope, they pray for it) that it is not for them to beg for peace, but for the President to hold out the olive-branch; and if the President were to issue a proclamation holding their leaders to a strict accountability for the rebellion, and offer the people protection in person and property, leaving the institution of slavery to the constitutional immunity of State laws, they will not only accept it, but will hail the act as magnanimous, noble, great.

Thus it will be perceived that the great masses of the Southern people are standing on a point of honor, which to them is of far greater import than defeat in battle, the loss of strongholds, or the reduction of their armies. All this they can bear, but dishonor they cannot bear, and they hope, they expect, they pray that the President will spare them this unenviable humiliation.

In view of these simple truths, I would ask, Messrs. Editors, through the medium of your valuable journal, if the President cannot afford to be magnanimous? If, after the fall of Charleston, he cannot afford to offer some terms which shall induce the great body of the Southern people to return to their allegiance to the Federal Union and the Government of the United States? If he is ambitious of an enviable fame, he will do it; if he desires to be remembered as the second Washington, he will do it; if he wishes to secure to himself the appellation of Abraham the Great, he will do it; if he wishes to imitate the example of Him who said "go thou and sin no more," he will do it; and, I may add, if he wishes to proclaim the popular sentiment of the American people, and the sentiment of humanity, civilization, and Christianity throughout the world, he will do it; which God grant, for peace's sake.

Yours, very truly,

JOHN ADAMS JR.

MR. TOOMBS'S LETTER.

The letter of ROBERT TOOMBS, of Georgia, which the reader will find in another column, is characteristic of that turbulent, overbearing man, and shows that he is already as little satisfied with the new Government that he helped to rear in the South as he was under that which his forefathers established, and which he conspired against and criminally sought to overthrow. He and a few others should, when peace is restored, be provided with an isolated residence in some remote corner of the world, where they might talk treason and hatch plots without harming any body but themselves.

The widow of Admiral FOOTE died in New Haven on Wednesday evening. Her age was forty-seven years. She has been ill ever since the death of the Admiral, just two months prior to her own death.

FOREWARNED, FOREARMED.

Some startling information has lately been received at New York from Liverpool of the approaching completion of several most formidable turreted rams which have been built in English ports for the American insurgent navy. It is stated that the first of these great rams was nearly finished; that she was completely plated, her masts and boilers in, as well as a large part of her machinery; and that she was expected to be ready for service by the 18th of this month. Her consort was launched on the 2d instant, as well as one at Glasgow, and both would be ready to sail by the 1st of September. We perceive by notices in Southern papers that the most astonishing results are anticipated by the insurgent Government from the invincibility of these powerful floating engines of war. They are expected to suppress the blockade of the Southern ports and capture the blockaders; to enter triumphantly by their invulnerability the ports of the Union and indemnify the South for all the damages it has suffered by the war; and, finally, to change the whole condition and aspect of the contest. All this would, we confess, look rather ugly if we could apprehend that so formidable an assault would find us unprepared for it; but no such notions which we observe in our papers of the advanced stage of preparation of new iron-clads and turreted rams on our side go far to allay the anxiety which we might otherwise feel on the subject. Our painstaking Secretary of the Navy, however, may be thought to resemble "William the Silent," has not, in the course of the war, been found to resemble in his habits that other Dutch worthy, Rip Van Winkle. The public has found him, we believe, pretty generally, wide awake.

PER EXAMPLE: Says the New York Evening Post of Wednesday:

"Workmen are engaged night and day in completing the splendid ocean iron-clad *Paritan*, which is to be ready for service by the 1st of October. The hull is now completely formed and the armor on all the lower part of the ship is fastened to within about seven feet of the top of the bulwarks. The plates are not yet fired, but will be in place very soon. The lower part of the vessel will not be very far advanced until she is afloat, as all efforts are concentrated on the outside for the present. The dimensions of the cylinders of the *Paritan's* engines will be over one hundred inches, which will give her a speed almost unparalleled in vessels of such magnitude. A great number of improvements have been introduced which were not contemplated when the vessel was begun. Her machinery is rapidly building, and will be nearly completed before the launch takes place.

"The new iron-clad *Tumach* is to be launched next week at Jersey City. She is the second of the nine vessels contracted for after the completion of the first Monitor. Her turret, armor, interior fittings and general characteristics are the same as those of the former vessels, with few exceptions. The new ventilating apparatus so successfully introduced into the *Lehigh* will be adopted in these vessels, as well as in all of her class. Mr. Birbeck, the builder, is at present employed in putting in on board of the *Tumach*, and will have it completed soon after the launch of the vessel. The turret is pierced for three guns, like the *Pasama* and *Montauk*. It is believed, however, that the battery will consist of one 15-inch gun and one 200 or 300 pound Parrot.

"Soon after the launch of the *Tumach* the *Monkton* and the *Mahopac* will be afloat. They are in the same yard with the *Tumach*, and have been built by the same firm.

"The iron-clad *Oriskany*, at St. Louis, is to be completed for sea service immediately. It is rumored in naval circles here that she is intended to reinforce the fleet at Charleston. The *Oriskany* has on board a new and very destructive missile, which was invented some time since, in the Mediterranean, by Chief Engineer Whittaker, of the United States Navy, who was ordered home to have his apparatus applied here."

The Boston Daily Advertiser, referring to the defence of Gen. Fitz John Porter by Mr. Johnson, which has just been published, says frankly—and the concession is strengthened by its being an Administration paper—

"We are bound to say that the impression produced on our minds by the perusal of the case, as finally stated in these closing documents upon each side from Mr. Holt and Mr. Johnson, does not justify the sentence against Gen. Porter. The evidence upon the essential points is weak, and whatever bears strongly against him is contradicted. It is clear, moreover, not only that the unfortunate failure of Gen. Pope's campaign was not in fact due to any want of efficiency or disobedience to orders on Gen. Porter's part, but also that Gen. Pope himself did not attribute his want of success to any such alleged inefficiency or disobedience. The whole affair wears very much the aspect of one of those unfortunate mistakes of administration which have characterized the management of the War Department, and about which loyal citizens feel bound to say as little as they can, consistently with the demands of public truth, but of which, when they do speak, they can say nothing in approval. The cause in which we are engaged is too strong to need to be propped up by any such miserable expedient as the unjust attempt to sacrifice the character of any body, least of all that of a soldier so brave and so capable as Gen. Porter."

LETTER FROM GEN. GRANT.

General GRANT had a public reception at the Gayoso House, in Memphis, on Wednesday night, 26th instant, at which the following letter was read:

MEMPHIS, (TENN.) AUGUST 26, 1863.

GENTLEMEN: I have received a copy of resolutions passed by the "Loyal Citizens of Memphis" at a meeting held at the rooms of the Chamber of Commerce, August 25, 1863, tendering me a public reception.

In accepting this testimonial, which I do at a great sacrifice of my personal feelings, I simply desire to pay a tribute to the first public exhibition in Memphis of loyalty to the Government which I represent in the Department of the Tennessee. I should dislike to refuse, for considerations of personal convenience, to acknowledge any where or in any form, the existence of sentiments which I have so long and so ardently desired to see manifested in the Department. The stability of this Government and the unity of this nation depend solely on the cordial support and the earnest loyalty of the people. While, therefore, I thank you sincerely for the kind expressions you have used towards me, I am profoundly gratified at this public recognition, in the city of Memphis, of the power and authority of the Government of the United States.

I thank you, too, in the name of the noble army which I have the honor to command. It is composed of men whose loyalty has been proved by their deeds of heroism and their willing sacrifice of life and health. They will rejoice with me that the miserable adherents of the rebellion, whom their benefactors have driven from this fair land, are being replaced by men who acknowledge no man's liberty as the only true foundation of human government.

May your efforts to restore your city to the cause of the Union be as successful as have been theirs to reclaim it from the deplorable state of the rebellion.

I have the honor to be, gentlemen, your very obedient servant.

Messrs. R. HOUGH, and others, Committee.

Memphis, Tennessee.

THE SIEGE OF CHARLESTON.

Our latest intelligence from Charleston—being down to Friday last, through Richmond papers—represents the bombardment of Sumter and Wagner as still going on, although the former was entirely disabled and almost demolished, and the reduction of the latter a question only of time. The telegram to Richmond of the 27th states that Gen. Gillmore's attack on the rebel forts was made on Wednesday by "an overwhelming force," and that his troops are working hard in the trenches in front of Fort Wagner. He is therefore advancing upon that fortification by regular approaches.

We have already stated that Gen. Gillmore had sent in a message to Gen. Beauregard demanding the evacuation of the works on Morris Island on pain of having Charleston shelled in case of refusal, and the consequent fulfillment of this threat for a short time by Gen. Gillmore. We subjoin the correspondence which took place on the subject between the two commanders, as we find it in the Richmond papers.

Gen. Gillmore's communication was sent under a flag of truce to the commanding officer at Fort Wagner, to be transmitted by him to Gen. Beauregard. It is as follows:

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE SOUTH, Morris Island, (S. C.) August 21, 1863.

GENERAL: I have the honor to demand of you the immediate evacuation of Morris Island and Fort Sumter by the Confederate forces. The present condition of Fort Sumter, and the rapid and progressive destruction which it is undergoing from my batteries, seem to render its complete demolition within a few hours a matter of certainty. All my heavy guns have now been opened.

Should you refuse to comply with this demand, or should I receive no reply thereon within four hours after it is delivered into the hands of your subordinate at Fort Wagner for transmission, I shall open fire on the city of Charleston from batteries already established within easy and effective range of the heart of the city.

I am, General, very respectfully, your obedient servant.

G. A. GILLMORE, Brigadier General Commanding.

To Gen. G. T. BEAUREGARD, Com. Confederate Forces, Charleston, S. C.

The Charleston Courier states that "General Beauregard, being absent on a reconnaissance, the communication, which was unsigned, was received at headquarters about a quarter to eleven o'clock on Friday night by Gen. Jordan, and by him returned for the signature of the writer. The communication was signed by Gen. Gillmore, and again returned. It was received at Gen. Beauregard's headquarters at nine o'clock on Saturday morning.

Between one and two o'clock, however, Saturday morning, the enemy commenced firing on the city, arousing the people from their slumbers."

The following is a copy of the reply of Gen. Beauregard to the communication of Gen. Gillmore, conveyed by Col. Roman under flag of truce to our flagship for delivery:

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE SOUTH, Charleston, (S. C.) August 22, 1863.

SIR: Last night, at fifteen minutes before eleven o'clock, during my absence on a reconnaissance of my fortifications, a communication was received at these headquarters dated "Headquarters Department of the South, Morris Island, (S. C.) August 21, 1863," demanding "the immediate evacuation of Morris Island and Fort Sumter by the Confederate forces," on the alleged grounds "that the present condition of Fort Sumter, and the rapid and progressive destruction which it is undergoing from my batteries seem to render its complete demolition within a few hours a matter of certainty."

Should you refuse to comply with this demand, or should I receive no reply thereon within four hours after it is delivered into the hands of your (my) subordinate at Fort Wagner for transmission, I shall open fire on the city of Charleston from batteries already established within easy and effective range of the heart of the city."

This communication to my address was without signature, and was of course returned. About half past one o'clock one of your batteries actually opened fire and threw a number of heavy shells into the city, the inhabitants of which, of course, were asleep and unarmed.

About nine o'clock this morning the communication alluded to above was returned to these headquarters, bearing your recognized official signature, and it can now be noted as your deliberate official act.

Among nations not barbarous the usages of war prescribe that when a city is about to be attacked timely notice shall be given by the attacking commander, in order that non-combatants may have an opportunity of withdrawing beyond its limits. Generally the time allowed is from one to three days; that is, time for the withdrawal of a good half of at least the women and children. You, sir, give only four hours, knowing that your notice, under existing circumstances, could not reach me in less than two hours, and that not less than the same time would be required for an answer to be conveyed from this city to Battery Wagner. With this knowledge, you threaten to open fire on this city, not to oblige its surrender, but to force it to evacuate these works, which you actually do, and throw a number of heavy shells into the city, the inhabitants of which, of course, were asleep and unarmed.

Your omission to attach your signature to such a grave paper must show the recklessness of the course upon which you have adventured; while the facts that you knowingly fixed a limit for replying an answer to your demand which made it almost impossible for me to receive any reply within that time, and that you actually did open fire and throw a number of the most destructive missiles ever used in war into the midst of a city unwarmed, and filled with sleeping women and children, will give you a "bad eminence" in history, even in the history of the war.

I am only surprised, sir, at the limits you have set to your demands. If in order to attain the abandonment of Morris Island and Fort Sumter you feel authorized to fire on this city, why did you not also include the works on Morris Island and James Island—may, even the city of Charleston in the same demand?

Since you have felt warranted in inaugurating this method of reducing batteries in your immediate front which were found otherwise impregnable, and a mode of warfare which I confidently expect to be atrocious and unworthy of any soldier, I now solemnly demand that you fire again on the city from your Morris Island batteries without giving a somewhat more reasonable time to remove non-combatants. I shall feel impelled to employ such stringent means of retaliation as may be available during the continuance of this attack.

Finally, I reply that neither the works on Morris Island nor Fort Sumter will be evacuated on the demand you have pleased to make. Already, however, I am taking measures to remove all non-combatants, who are now fully aware of and alive to what they may expect at your hands.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

G. T. BEAUREGARD, General Comd.

IMPORTANT FROM KEY WEST.

CAPTURE OF MORE PRIZES.

Correspondence of the New York Times.

KEY WEST, AUGUST 22, 1863.

Another fine prize steamer was brought into our harbor on the 19th, by Acting Master Martine, of the United States steamer *De Soto*, Capt. Walker, by whom she was captured in the Gulf to the south and east of Mobile about two hundred miles, having on board five hundred and eighty barrels of cotton. She is one of those fine Alabama boats, entirely new in all her upper works, and probably fitted up for this voyage, called the *Alice Vivian*, and was to have brought as passenger from Mobile the rebel Gen. Slaughter and his staff, who were on board, but finally declined to return and take another boat. Our naval officers were advised of this in time to keep the sharpest lookout for him. The cargo of the *Alice Vivian* will be discharged here and sent to New York, while the steamer, together with the *James Battelle*, another river boat, will be sent to New Orleans.

On the 20th still another prize steamer came in from the *De Soto*, whose officers will all become rich on their prize money. This is the fast side-wheel steamer *Crescent*, from Mobile, and last from Havana, with a full and assorted cargo of merchandise, including a large proportion of provisions and drugs. She was captured by the *De Soto* while on her way to Mobile, and had no flag, not even the English. She will be a valuable prize.

On the 21st an English top-sail schooner, the *Jornie*, was brought in a prize to the barque *Restless*, whose station is at Charlotte Harbor, Florida. This schooner was cleared at Matamoros for Liverpool, with a full cargo of cotton, manifested as owned by merchants of Texas, hence the capture. This is probably a necessity of form in order to evade the French blockade of Matamoros. If so, John Bull is between two fires.

The prize steamer *Dolphin*, about which so much has been said in the British journals, is now being loaded up with cotton and turpentine for dispatch to New York, where her small proportions, dilapidated appearance, and age of twenty-three years, will cause disappointment and surprise, reminding forcibly of the old saw of "great cry and little wool."

Admiral Bailey's fleet of small cruisers, improved from the captures of the squadron, and consisting of numerous small schooners and sloops, suitably fitted up and armed, are doing excellent service in keeping under observation the host of shoal pirates and bays among these Florida keys and on this coast generally. Every few days a one of them come in with captured property. This week there have been the schooner *Two Sisters*, from Cedar Keys, with twenty-four bales of cotton and two families of refugees, including several women and children, grateful for being rescued from the want and distress of secessionism; another, a schooner in charge of Acting Master Grant, with a small boat loaded with turpentine, captured in the neighborhood of Charlotte Harbor. These small boats, from their light draft of water, escape our large cruisers only to fall into the hands of the mosquito fleet.

The Admiralty Court is still with its presiding officer, the Hon. Judge Martin, and from the very large amount of prize property constantly being brought into this port for adjudication, we suppose that the new appointee, whoever he may be, only awaits a nearer approach of the full season to assume his duties here.

The tone of public feeling is changing very much among both loyal and disloyal men, and women too. The former are hopeful and confident to a degree that admits of no apprehension of future serious disaster to the cause of the Union, while the latter are considerably resigning themselves to abandonment of all hope of prolonging the war for a short time the power of Jeff. Davis over the armed citizens of the South. They, like all men, yield to fate, and in a variety of ways and means evince their desire to be considered in the most favorable light with reference to the changes and changing aspect of affairs.

IMPORTANT FROM JAPAN.

ITS PORTS CLOSED AND ALL FOREIGNERS ORDERED FROM THE COUNTRY.

Extracts from Correspondence of the Philadelphia Inquirer.

KANAGAWA, JUNE 22, 1863.

Since my last, of May 12th, until within a few days, nothing of special importance had occurred relative to the existing differences between this and the English Government. Interviews between high officials took place; promises were made, and postponements asked for until the 11th instant, when matters appear to have been amicably settled by the Japanese official appointed by the Government for their settlement, signing a written obligation to pay the indemnity demanded at short intervals of time, the first to be made on the 18th.

When the 18th arrived the Japanese officials pleaded some trivial excuse for a postponement of the payment until next day, but when morning came they entirely backed down from their agreement, declaring they would not pay a dollar, on the ground that the official sent to arrange matters was not authorized to enter into such a one. Of course such a refusal repudiation of a written obligation put an end to any further negotiations, and, accordingly, the English Minister turned the whole affair over to Admiral Kuper to enforce its payment. He made known to the public his decision in the case, through the British Consul, Mr. Winchester, who called a meeting of the English subjects for that purpose; also, to other nationalities through their respective Consuls.

Yesterday, the 21st, Admiral Kuper made known, through the same source, the fact of the affair having been placed in his hands, and his determination to take active measures, and calling upon the inhabitants to take means to secure their personal safety and property, more particularly calling upon those having facilities to send them on board ships in the harbor as early as possible; subsequently offering the steamer *Comandante* as a place of refuge. To effect all this a period of eight days would be allowed before active hostilities would commence, unless the Japanese boat the initiative.

Thus it would appear the ball is about to open. The French act as allies of the English throughout, and their Admiral has declared his intention of defending Yokohama by sending a force to shore for that purpose.

As was expected would be the case, the *Tycoon* has not been permitted to return to Yeddo, and Prince Mito has been appointed acting *Tycoon* in his place. What consequences will ensue from this we cannot say.

The reason the Japanese allege is that the life of the *Tycoon* would be endangered were he to pay it. This may or may not be the case, but one thing is known, that the spiritual Emperor is opposed to foreign intercourse, and apparently has the power to enforce obedience from the others.

JUNE 24.—After several attempts to re-open negotiations, the Japanese paid this morning as much of the money as was due. The matter may now be fairly considered settled, and peace once more prevails, at least for the present.

JUNE 24.—After my letter was mailed, and every body was congratulating themselves on the prospects of peace, it has become publicly known that the Japanese have written to the several Ministers of the foreign Powers declaring all the ports open for commerce closed, and ordering all foreigners out of the country within thirty days. What the new phase in public affairs will produce is not difficult to imagine. War seems inevitable; in fact, it is a declaration of war by the Japanese themselves. They say they paid the money only because they promised to do so. A council of the foreign Ministers is now being held, but what course of action will be decided upon is not yet known. It is hardly possible any thing very definite can be decided upon prior to the sailing of the vessel which carries the mail, as from all appearances they (the Japanese) are determined to expel foreigners.

OFFICIAL FROM CHARLESTON.

FORT SUMTER DEMOLISHED.

The following official despatches have been received at the headquarters of the army. They confirm the unofficial account published yesterday that Fort Sumter has been reduced to a mass of ruins:

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE SOUTH, Morris Island, (S. C.) August 24, 1863.

MAJOR GENERAL H. W. HALLECK, General-in-Chief:

SIR: I have the honor to report the practical demolition of Fort Sumter as the result of our seventeen days' bombardment of the work, including two days of which a powerful northeasterly storm most seriously diminished the accuracy of our fire.

Fort Sumter is to-day a shapeless and harmless mass of ruins. My chief of artillery, Col. J. W. Turner, reports its destruction so far complete that it is no longer of any "avail in the defence of Charleston." He also says that "by a longer fire it could be made more completely a ruin and a mass of broken masonry, but could scarcely be made more powerless for the defence of the harbor."

My breaching batteries were located at distances ranging between 3,330 and 4,240 yards from the works, and now remain as efficient as ever. I deem it unnecessary, at present, to continue the fire upon the ruins of Fort Sumter.

I have also, under a heavy fire from James Island, established batteries on my left within effective range of the heart of Charleston city, and have opened with them, after giving Gen. Beauregard due notice of my intention to do so.

My notification to Gen. Beauregard, my reply thereto, with the threat of retaliation, and my rejoinder, have been transmitted to army headquarters.

The projectiles from my batteries entered the city, and Gen. Beauregard himself designated them as the "most destructive missiles ever used in war."

The report of my chief of artillery, and an accurate sketch of the ruins of Fort Sumter, taken at 1 1/2 M. yesterday, six hours before we ceased firing, are herewith transmitted.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

G. A. GILLMORE, Brigadier General Commanding.

REPORT OF COL. TURNER.

OFFICE OF CHIEF OF ARTILLERY, Department of the South, Morris Island, (S. C.) August 23, 1863.

GENERAL: I have the honor to report the effect that our breaching batteries have had upon Fort Sumter, and the condition of that work to-night, at the close of the seventeenth day's bombardment.

The gorges of the fort is almost a complete mass of ruins. For the distance of several hundred feet along the way of this face the ramparts are removed entirely, and the places quite to the arches, and but for the sand bags, with which the casemates were filled, and which have served to sustain the broken arches and masses of masonry, it would have long since been entirely cut away, and with it the arches to the floor of the second tier of casemates. The debris on this point now forms a ramp reaching as high as the floor of these casemates. The parapet wall of the two northerly faces is completely carried away, a small portion only being left in the angle made by the gorges wall, and the remains of these faces are also a total ruin. Quite one half of our projectiles seem to have struck the parapet and parapet of these two faces, and judge of the effect they have had upon the gorges on these two sides must be very great, and I am of the opinion that nearly every arch in these fronts must be broken in. But one gun remains in position on these two fronts. This is in the angle of the gorge, and I think unserviceable.

The ruin extends around, taking in the northerly face as far as can be seen. A portion of this face adjoining the angle it makes with the southerly face is concealed, but from the great number of missiles which have struck in this angle during the last two days, it cannot be otherwise than a mass of broken masonry, and the gorges guns can be left on this face in a serviceable condition. The ramparts on this angle, as well as in the south-easterly face, must be ploughed up and greatly shattered; the parapet on this latter face being torn off in many places, and the masonry of the fort is in a state of ruin. The three remaining guns on this face could have escaped, but with the assistance of a powerful gale, I cannot determine that more than one of these guns can be used. The carriages of the others are evidently more or less shattered, and such is the ruin of the parapet and parapet in the immediate vicinity of the gun that it probably could not be served for any length of time.

In fine, the destruction of the fort is so far complete that it is to-day of no avail in the defence of the harbor of Charleston; by a longer fire it can be made more completely a ruin and a mass of broken masonry, but could scarcely be more powerless for the defence of the harbor.

I therefore respectfully submit my opinion that a continuance of our fire is no longer necessary, as giving us no advantage for the consumption of our resources.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN W. TURNER, Colonel and Chief of Artillery.

Brig Gen G. A. GILLMORE, Commanding Department of the South, Morris Island, S. C.

THROWING SHELLS INTO CHARLESTON.

The Richmond Examiner of the 24th instant, after stating that Gen. Gillmore has thrown twelve shells "into the inhabited part of the city," and remarking that such "business" should occasion no surprise, says:

"But what does startle is the distance from which the shells were thrown. The battery is in a marsh five miles from the city. It has long been claimed by the invaders of the modern ordinance that the new artillery was available for such purposes at that distance. But this is the first practical test of their pretension on record, and it remains to be seen whether the spirit of Charleston is about to be tried in the terrible ordeal of a bombardment. It is well that the place is prepared. Governor Roman has lately issued a proclamation informing the citizens that the plan of the defence admitted that gunnery, and recommending all non-combatants to withdraw. After the confirmation thereof furnished by Gillmore there is little fear that his advice will not be attended to by families who have not fled to the hills and caves. Charleston will be shelled, but that will be a circumstance of minor importance in the successful defence of its fortifications and harbor. If we can retain them and foil the enemy that glorious victory we may still compensate for all the injury which bombs can do to empty houses."

ATTACK ON THE ENEMY'S RIFLE FIRTS.

SHELLING OF THE CITY SUSPENDED.

CHARLESTON, AUGUST 27.—The enemy's attack on our rifle-ports on Wednesday night was made about seven o'clock by an overwhelming force. On Thursday the firing was slow, with no unusual incidents.

CHARLESTON, AUGUST 28.—The bombardment of Fort Sumter and Wagner proceeds sluggishly. The enemy is working hard in the trenches in front of Fort Wagner. No further attempt has been made to shell the city.

NEW YORK, AUGUST 30.—The steamer *Bermuda*, from Port Royal on Wednesday morning, has arrived at this port, calling off Charleston. The Captain reports that Fort Wagner has not yet been taken, and cannot be at present. He confirms the report that Fort Sumter is knocked to pieces. Further naval operations will be carried on without regard to Wagner, the capture of which will be left to Gen. Gillmore.

The *Bermuda* brings seventy prisoners. She spoke, on the 28th instant, the steamer *Dolphin*, from Key West for Philadelphia.

A DESTRUCTIVE FIRE IN BOSTON.

BOSTON, AUGUST 31, P. M.—A destructive fire is now raging in East Boston. It commenced in the Atlantic Works, where the Monitor turret are constructed. The buildings, with four towers nearly finished, are destroyed. The flames are rapidly extending throughout the mechanic portions of East Boston.

IMPORTANT FROM TENNESSEE.

MOVEMENTS OF ROSECRANS AND BURNSIDE.

STEVENS, (ALA.) AUGUST 29.—The Army of the Cumberland crossed the Tennessee river at four points to-day with infantry and cavalry. The Second Kentucky Cavalry captured thirty-five pickets at a point opposite Stevenson. Gen. Reynolds captured a large force at Shiloh and took a camp on Falling Water creek. Among the captured are the notorious guerrilla Mays and the Tennessee rebel Congressman Cannon. Little or no resistance was made. The rebels are reported to have a force at Rome and Cleveland, along the Georgia State railroad. Gen. Burnside is in the region of Kingston, and will attack that place before long.

MILITARY EXECUTION.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, August 29, 1863.

The execution of the substitute deserters sentenced to the penalty of death in General Order No. 54 took place to-day. More than ordinary interest was exhibited in this enforcement of military law, and it is estimated that not less than twenty-five thousand persons were present. The ground was well selected, and every arrangement so complete that no accident occurred to mar the solemnity of the proceedings. The position of the spectators was upon a semi-circular elevation, partially surrounding the place of execution.

Previous to the execution the scene presented a remarkable view to the spectators. Two of the sentenced were Protestants, two Catholics, and the fifth a Hebrew. The spiritual advisers of each were present, administering the last consolations of religion. The criminals were sitting upon their respective coffins, with the yawning graves in the rear. The troops were drawn up in close column, by division, covering the complete semi-circle, separated from the spectators by a creek.

The immediate order for the execution was issued by Gen. Griffin, at three o'clock P. M., and the officer of the guard, Capt. Crocker, (118th Pennsylvania), recalled the clergy from their spiritual duties.

The remainder of the proceeding is briefly told. At the order to fire, thirty-six muskets were discharged, and instant death, as announced by the firing, was the result. The bodies were then placed in their respective graves, and the clergy performed the religious rites over the dead.